

Practice Putting YOUR Data to Work

Exercise 1: “What’s the problem?”

Prevention of alcohol, tobacco, and other drug use is important to improving adolescent health. Fill in the matrix below with your local data for current use (any use within the past 30 days) of these substances among youth as follows and calculate the difference:

Find results on page 1 of your local report

Grade	Alcohol			Cigarettes			Marijuana		
	State	Local	Difference	State	Local	Difference	State	Local	Difference
6th grade	3.8 ±0.7			2.2 ±0.4			1.3 ±0.4		
8th grade	17.8 ±1.5			9.2 ±1.1			10.4 ±1.1		
10th grade	29.3 ±1.9			15.0 ±1.4			18.3 ±1.9		
12th grade	42.8 ±2.4			22.7 ±2.3			24.7 ±1.7		

Higher frequency of risk factors, and decreased frequency of protective factors, measured in the Healthy Youth Survey using validated scales, is known to predict future substance use and these measures can therefore help to target prevention efforts. Fill in the matrix below with your local data for the risk and protective factor scales that are associated with substance abuse as follows:

Find results on page 15 (6th grade) or page 30 (8th, 10th and 12th) of your local report

Grade	Low neighborhood attachment			Laws & norms favorable to drug use			Perceived availability of drugs			Academic failure			Low commitment to school		
	State	Local	Diff.	State	Local	Diff.	State	Local	Diff.	State	Local	Diff.	State	Local	Diff.
6th grade	-----	-----	-----	37.1 ±1.8			23.6 ±1.8			41.2 ±1.9			40.5 ±1.5		
8th grade	41.1 ±2.5			33.0 ±2.1			29.3 ±2.0			47.3 ±1.9			34.4 ±1.8		
10th grade	45.0 ±2.4			38.7 ±3.7			35.5 ±3.1			46.8 ±2.6			37.3 ±3.3		
12th grade	46.9 ±3.7			39.3 ±2.4			45.2 ±3.4			48.5 ±2.4			37.6 ±2.8		

Grade	Community Opportunities for prosocial involvement			Community rewards for prosocial involvement			School opportunities for prosocial involvement			School rewards for prosocial involvement		
	State	Local	Diff.	State	Local	Diff.	State	Local	Diff.	State	Local	Diff.
6 th grade	25.8 ±1.5			48.0 ±1.7			-----	-----	-----	50.5 ±2.2		
8th grade	50.7 ±2.0			54.9 ±1.8			62.6 ±2.4			52.1 ±2.2		
10th grade	46.6 ±2.9			60.3 ±2.2			59.6 ±2.7			61.4 ±2.5		
12th grade	42.7 ±3.4			55.1 ±3.7			63.5 ±2.2			45.8 ±3.3		

Exercise 1: “What’s the problem?” continued

- Is there a particular substance that stands out as important to address?

- Are there particular risk or protective factors that stand out as important to address?

- Are any of the local rates *significantly* different from the state?

- Was there anything about the way that the survey was administered in your community that could have impacted the results?

- Do you think that community leaders or other important people are aware of the problem?

- Do know of current programs and resources in your community to prevent ATOD use?

- Are there any steps that you will need to take to prepare your community before new programs to address ATOD use can be implemented?

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Exercise 2: “What’s the priority?”

The next step is using your data around youth substance use and risk and protective factors to prioritize

- Which of these factors affects the most youth?

- Which of these factors potentially has the biggest impact on the health of youth?

- For which of these factors do you have information about interventions or methods that have been shown to be effective?

- Which of the interventions that you know about can be reasonably implemented in your community?

- What other measures from the Healthy Youth Survey could be used to set priorities?

- What other sources of data might be useful?

Once a priority has been identified; goals, targets and objectives need to be written to further define it. **Program goals** describe the ultimate vision of success for the program. For example: “our program’s goal will be to improve mental health among youth.”

- If your community wanted to focus on alcohol issues, what would a good goal be?

Program targets are specific populations for whom the program is most important.

- If your community wanted to focus on alcohol issues, who would the target be?

Exercise 2: “What’s the priority?” continued

Subpopulation measures can be useful for identifying targets. For example, the state results show the following for alcohol use measures are different among boys and girls:

Grade	Alcohol Use			Binge Drinking		
	Girls	Boys	Difference	Girls	Boys	Difference
6th grade	3.0	4.6	1.6	-----	-----	-----
8th grade	19.4	16.0	3.4	10.9	9.1	1.8
10th grade	30.0	28.5	1.5	18.4	18.9	.5
12th grade	40.9	44.9	4.0	23.4	31.6	8.2

- What are the rates of these factors in your community?

Grade	Alcohol Use			Binge Drinking		
	Girls	Boys	Difference	Girls	Boys	Difference
6th grade						
8th grade						
10th grade						
12th grade						

- Does the gender data change your target?

An objective is a quantifiable measure of activities for achieving the program’s goal. For example, to reach the goal of improving mental health among youth, a program may set objectives such as:

We will increase availability and promotion of school-based counseling resources for all grades so that by 2004 more than X% of 6th/8th/10th/12th grade youth report that they have someone they can talk to about problems (from a baseline of Y% 6th/8th/10th/12th grade youth in 2002).

- What objectives could you set for your program around alcohol issues? (results that could be achieved and measured by the 2004 Healthy Youth Survey).

- How many youth will need to be affected in order to meet your objective? (for example, to change something by two percentage points, how many youth will have to change?)

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Exercise 3: “How to know if it worked?”

To evaluate the success of a program, it is helpful to identify a series of measures of results. Using the logic model template below, write some information about a program that might be implemented in your community (i.e., a program with a goal of reducing tobacco use among youth):

- What program activity will you conduct that needs to be evaluated?
- What measures are available to you to help evaluate your efforts?
- What additional surveys or measures could supplement your evaluation activities?

Program Activity: _____

Activities	Outputs	Shorter-term outcomes	Longer-term outcomes or Impacts

Example: Prevent ATOD use by strengthening academic achievement protective factors with elementary school aged children.

Activities <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Establish after-school tutoring programs for high-risk youth• Establish peer mentoring programs to encourage reading for younger students	Outputs <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Number of students enrolled in tutoring programs• Number of youth and classrooms participating in mentoring programs	Shorter-term outcomes <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Increase teachers' perception of classroom effort and skill among youth• Increase academic achievement among 6th graders	Longer-term outcomes or Impacts <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Reduce lifetime use of cigarettes among 6th graders• Reduce lifetime use of alcohol among 6th graders
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Exercise 4: Grant writing

Specific justification for funding need and proof of capacity to address a problem should be presented when writing a grant. All the topics previously addressed will help in this regard.

Data from the Healthy Youth Survey can be used in writing a grant, to provide baseline information for program evaluation and/or justification of need for funding. When discussing Healthy Youth Survey data in a grant application, you should provide the following information to a funding agency to assure them of the quality of the survey data:

- When was the survey most recently administered, and when will it be administered again?

- How many students participated the survey?

- What was the response rate?

- Who is represented in the survey? (geographically, demographically, student types)

- Are the survey methods valid and reliable?

- What measures were collected as part of the survey, which demonstrate need for funding, or could contribute to evaluation of program effectiveness?
